Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Traffic Accident Section

CRASH CHRONICLE

Volume 1, Issue 1 FALL 2002

Facts on TraCS

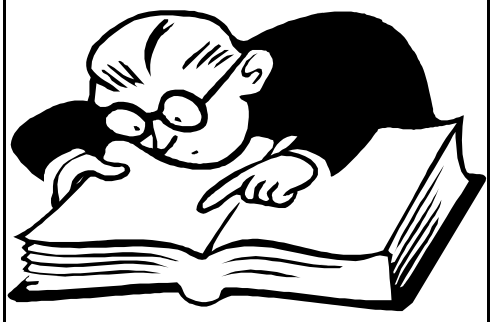
TraCS (Traffic and Criminal Software) is an application developed by the state of Iowa in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to serve as a national model for the development of automated reporting systems.

TraCS includes modules for crash reporting, citation writing, operating while intoxicated reporting, commercial motor vehicle inspections and incident reporting. Common data can be shared among these modules.

TraCS provides a state-of-the-art information management tool to electronically capture, validate and transfer incident data in the field.

TraCS has the capability of incorporating other technologies such as bar code scanners, digital cameras, wireless communications, global positioning systems (GPS), mobile printers and pen based computers.

Sixteen states have licensing agreements to use TraCS. Several other states, including Hawaii, Minnesota, and South Dakota, have expressed an interest in TraCS.



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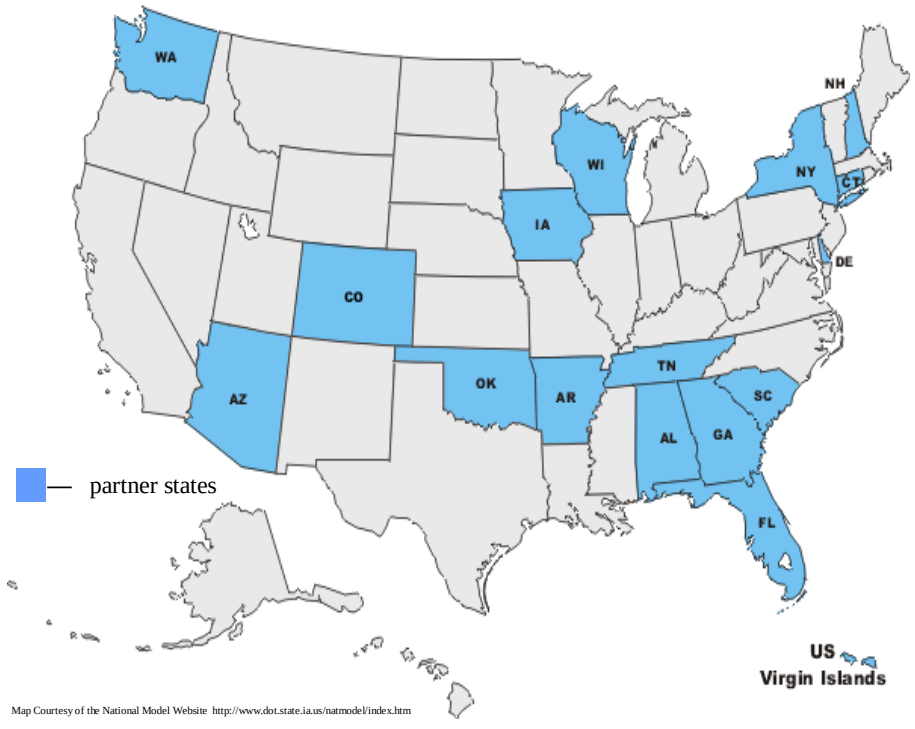
Partner States



Map Courtesy of the National Model Website http://www.dot.state.ia.us/natmodel/index.htm

Badger TraCS

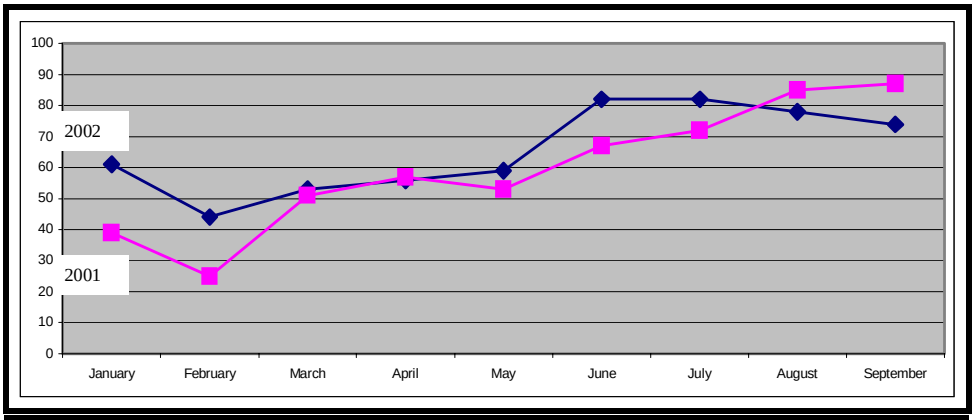
The Wisconsin Motor Vehicle Accident Report Form (MV4000) is a paper form that contains standard informational fields for crash reporting. Law enforcement officers complete the MV4000 in the field. These forms are reviewed by the shift supervisor, sent back to the officer for corrections, and mailed to the Traffic Accident Section (TAS). Once received, the MV4000 is reviewed again for accuracy and completeness, and scanned to capture approximately 60% of the data. The remaining 40% of the data is entered manually by TAS data entry personnel. The data is stored in an IBM DB2 relational database. A series of error correction procedures are performed on the data. Crash data is available for analysis about three months after receipt.

TAS plans to implement TraCS to automate crash data reporting for law enforcement agencies statewide. Full implementation involves the development of three data entry systems: an internal crash entry system to process the MV4002, Driver Report of Accident forms (Phase 1, completed July 2002), a crash entry system for central office staff to process the paper MV4000, Motor Vehicle Accident Report forms (Phase 2, scheduled to begin in September 2002), and a crash data collection system with electronic submittal of data for law enforcement agencies statewide (Phase 3, pilot scheduled to begin December 2003). Knowledge gained from phases 1 and 2 will be applied to the development of an electronic crash data reporting system for law enforcement.

Wisconsin recently contracted for an "external search" feature to be added to TraCS. This feature allows TraCS to communicate with a wide variety of data sources. Research is being conducted to investigate connectivity to the eTIME system using this external search feature.

Iowa currently uses the Center for Transportation Research and Education (CTRE) incident location tool in conjunction with TraCS to map crash sites. Wisconsin is exploring the CTRE incident location tool as well as other location technologies, including GPS and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL).

The benefits of TraCS include reductions in paperwork and administrative duties, increased timeliness of data availability and increased accuracy of data. Implementation of TraCS will definitely benefit law enforcement and the State of Wisconsin.



Fatalities	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
2002	589 As of 10/16/02	61	44	53	56	59	82	82	78	74
2001	536 As of end of Sep 01	39	25	51	57	53	67	72	85	87

FATALITY STATISTICS

Fatalities for Wisconsin have increased considerably from last year. Failure to use seatbelts, speed, and alcohol have all contributed to the rising numbers. For additional fatality statistics, visit the TAS website at http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/drivers/traffic/crash/fatality.htm

LEGISLATIVE NEWS AND UPDATES

THE PERSONAL ASSISTIVE MOBILITY DEVICE

The Segway People Mover in action

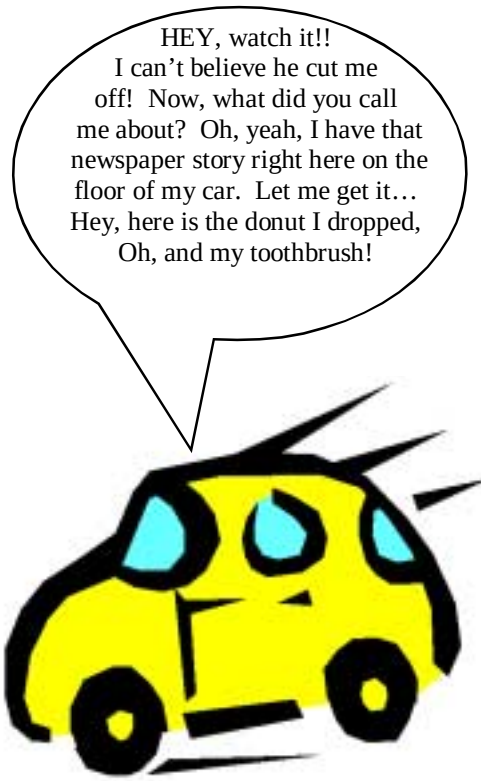
2001 Wisconsin Act 90 pertains to electric personal assistive mobility devices, such as the Segway People Mover.

The electric personal assistive mobility device is a self-balancing, 2-nontandem-wheeled device that is designed to transport only one person. It has an electric propulsion system that limits the maximum speed of the device to 15 miles or less per hour. These devices are exempt from registration.

If an electric personal assistive mobility device is involved in a reportable motor vehicle crash, law enforcement should complete the MV4000 as follows:
Unit Type = Equipment (5)
Vehicle Type = Miscellaneous (21).

The Segway People Mover

Cell Phone Study



2001 Assembly Bill 201 proposes to amend s.346.70 (3m) (c) of the Wisconsin State Statutes relating to requiring traffic crash reports to include information on cellular or other mobile telephone use.

Prior to enacting legislation to restrict cell phone use by motorists, a special crash study will be conducted at the request of Assembly Representatives Jerry Petrowski, (R), Chair of the Assembly Highway Safety Committee and Tony Staskunas, (D).

This six month study is being conducted by the Wisconsin State Patrol. Information will be collected for every crash and recorded in field 19 (special study) of the MV4000.

The special study began on May 1, 2002, and was completed October 31, 2002. The data will now be compiled and submitted to analysts in State Patrol and the Bureau of Transportation Safety. The analysis will identify patterns of motorist cell phone use in relation to motor vehicle crashes and include recommendations for possible cell phone legislation.

The results will be forwarded to the Legislature, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and other interested parties by April 2003.

A Chat With Pat

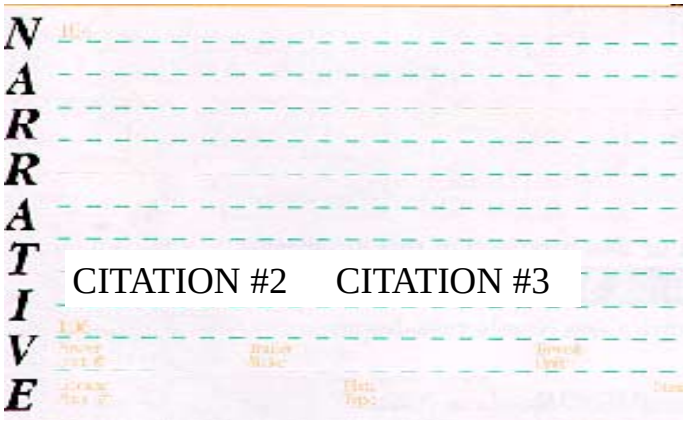
The next few months will prove to be an exciting time as Wisconsin moves forward with implementation of TraCS. We will keep you informed of our progress in future issues of the CRASH CHRONICLE.

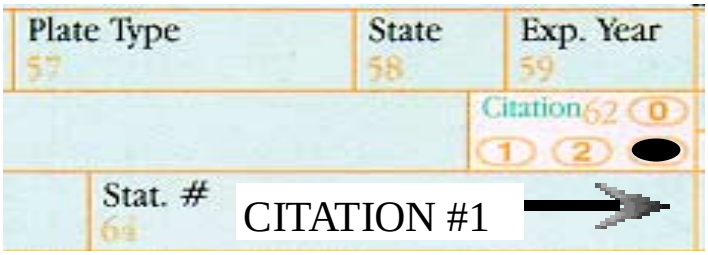
Patricia McCallum, Chief, Traffic Accident Section

QUALITY CONTROL IN TAS

As part of its routine activities, TAS runs several monthly error reports against the crash files to identify missing or incorrect data. The error reports focus on mistakes made by TAS staff in keying the reports and errors made by the officers in filling out the MV4000. Once the errors are identified, corrections are made if possible. For example, one report looks for incorrect municipality and county codes. Another looks for duplicate VIN numbers entered for the same crash.

A common uncorrectable error has to do with citation data. If an officer indicates in field 64 that a driver was issued three citations, the computer system would expect that three citation statute references would be listed on the MV4000. The statute reference for the first citation should be shown in field 64 with a small arrow next to it, since more than one citation was issued. The statute references for the second and third citations should then be listed in the narrative. It is a common mistake for statute references to be missing. Sometimes, the officer writes the first statute number in field 64 but then forgets to enter the additional statutes in the narrative. Other times, the officer writes in the citation number (the number pre-printed on the citation) or the charge code (for example, FYR) instead of the statute references (i.e., 346.18 (2)).





The crash data is analyzed by many transportation safety professionals in order to identify ways that highway safety can be improved. It is imperative that the data be as complete and accurate as possible.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Traffic Accident Section

Hill Farms State Office Building
4802 Sheboygan Avenue,
Rm 804
Madison WI 53707-7919

We are on the Web!
http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/drivers/traffic/index.htm

Crash Chronicle Editor: Scott A. Stary, Email: traffic-accidents.dmv@dot.state.wi.us